

Amendments to the Specification

¶2 It is well known to provide mowing devices with remote controls for the safety or convenience of the operator. Most such devices, for example, those described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,351,778, U.S. Pat. No. 4,964,265, U.S. Pat. No. 4,318,266, and U.S. Pat. No. 3,800,902, have utilized remote controls on relatively small, lightweight, lawn mowers that would not be significantly damaged if they were to turn over. Those devices have not been designed to minimize the risk of turnover on steep slopes. Devices for cutting vegetation along roads, railway rights-of-way and the like, have been larger and have included provision for operation by a driver mounted on the device. While some such devices, like that described in U.S. Pat. No. ~~5,711,129~~ 5,711,139, have been designed to minimize the risk of turnover, they have a relatively high center of gravity and are subject to damage if they do turn over on the steep slope.

¶5 The use of a two cycle gasoline engine permits the mower to operate on steep slopes without being deprived of oil, as would occur if a four cycle engine were employed. The mounting of the rollover bars and all of the drive means except the hydraulic motors on the vertically adjustable deck maximizes the extent to which the center of gravity of the mower can be vertically adjusted to minimize the risk that the mower will roll over on a steep slope. The remotely controlled clutch between the engine and vegetation cutting blade allows the mower to be moved under remote control while the vegetation cutting blade is disengaged, thus enhancing the safety of operation. The ability to remotely control the speed and direction of rotation of the ground wheels on either side of the mowing device independent of the speed and direction of rotation of the ground wheels on the other side permits the operator, not only

to cause the mowing device to move forward and backward and to turn, but also to pivot about any of the number of vertical ~~axis~~ axes intersecting the body of the mowing device, thereby enhancing its maneuverability and suitability for operation in confined or obstructed areas.

¶15 FIGS. 1 and 3 show a mower deck 58 comprising an upper plate 60 and side guard 62 to guard the vegetation cutting blade 64. The deck 58 includes a retractable segment 66, which can be raised and lowered by means of hydraulic cylinder 68. Support plates 70, 72 and 74 are provided for mounting an internal combustion engine 76, a right side hydraulic pump 78 and a left side hydraulic pump 80 respectively. Support pipes 82 are attached to the side guard 62 to allow rollover bars 84 to be removably affixed to the mower deck 58. The deck 58 is provided with attachment plates 86 and, as shown in FIG. 2, the frame 12 is provided with mounting plates 88 so that the deck 58 can be bolted to the frame 12. As is illustrated in FIG. 2, the mounting plates 88 have bolt holes at different heights so that the height of the deck with respect to the frame can be adjusted.

¶17 As is shown in FIG. 1, the internal combustion engine 76 drives the hydraulic pumps 78 and 80 and vegetation cutting blade 64 through conventional mechanical connections. A clutch 98 is provided so that the vegetation cutting blade 64 can be disengaged without depriving the hydraulic pumps 78 and 80 of power. The hydraulic pumps 78 and 80 are hydraulically connected to the hydraulic motors ~~14 and 16~~ 50 and 56 respectively by flexible hoses, not shown, which permit each hydraulic pump to drive the hydraulic motor to which it is connected regardless of the adjustment of the height of the deck 58 with respect to the frame 12.